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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [LH](#)

SUBJECT: VISIT OF SPECIAL ENVOY GREGG RICKMAN: CONCERNED  
ABOUT CONTINUED INEFFECTIVENESS OF GOL ON JEWISH ISSUES

Classified By: Ambassador John A. Cloud for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) SUMMARY. Gregg Rickman, Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, visited Lithuania September 15-18 and met with members of the Jewish community, GOL officials, and representatives from civil society and academia. Rickman came away from his meetings concerned about the ineffectiveness of GOL efforts to resolve several Jewish issues. End summary.

#### Investigation of anti-Nazi partisans

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¶2. (U) Rickman discussed with GOL officials two investigations of actions of anti-Nazi partisans -- one involving Israeli historian Yitzhak Arad and the other involving the death of 38 people in Kaniukai (or Koniuchy) village. Several GOL officials -- including MFA Vice Minister Jaroslav Neverovic, MP Emmanuel Zingeris, and the PM's adviser Vilius Kavaliauskas -- told Rickman that the Prosecutor's office is independent and there is little that others in the GOL can do to influence it. Vice Minister Neverovic pointed out that the Prosecutor's office has many investigations dealing with Soviet and Nazi crimes -- there are 42 ongoing investigations of Nazi crimes and 79 of Soviet crimes. Neverovic also noted that many Nazi crimes were investigated during the Soviet period. Rickman stressed to Neverovic and others that the impression of the anti-Nazi partisan investigations around the world is very negative and any mitigating nuances are missed. (Note: On September 25, the Prosecutor's office issued a statement noting that, due to lack of evidence, the part of the investigation about Arad's involvement in criminal activities was closed on September 19.)

#### Anti-Semitism

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¶3. (U) Academics and GOL officials both expressed concern about the current increase in anti-Semitic events in Lithuania. At the same time, most were reluctant to call for the Prosecutor either to halt or resolve the anti-Nazi partisan investigations, due to the impression this might give of trying to impinge on the Prosecutor's independence.

#### Cemeteries

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¶4. (U) The GOL has still not found a way forward to protect the Snipiskes cemetery and GOL officials had no positive news to report. Rickman also visited a Jewish cemetery in the city of Kaunas that was in a state of extreme disarray -- a couple of teenagers playing cards on a gravestone, people walking their dogs in the cemetery, toppled gravestones, trash strewn about, and overgrown grass and weeds.

#### Restitution

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¶5. (C) Rickman heard mixed messages on communal property restitution. MP Zingeris, contrary to earlier pessimism he expressed to Post, was optimistic that the legislation would

come to parliament. Prime Minister's adviser Kavaliauskas was unsure if the GOL would present the relevant amendments to the Parliament this autumn. (Note: Kavaliauskas's statements contradict what we have been told by several more-senior officials: that the Government will submit the legislation to the parliament in late October or early November.)

Comment

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¶6. (U) Rickman's visit was another demonstration to the GOL that these issues are important to Washington. We will continue to remind our interlocutors of this fact.

¶7. (U) Special Envoy Rickman cleared this cable.  
LEADER